

Inflated Prices Make Home Gardens Important Now as in War Time

By ADOLPH KRUEH.

It will be much more necessary to make food gardens during 1920 than it was during the war. Then we were fighting the enemy who planned to encroach upon the liberties of mankind. Now we have to fight the much more powerful General H. C. of L., and the most effective way to fight that evil leader of hungry, discontented hordes is to produce more. Every one who has access to a piece of ground, no matter how small, should plan to produce some food during this coming summer, for that is the only way in which saving in food can be effected.

Gardens can be made most anywhere if the spirit planning them is enterprising enough. A back yard, an adjoining lot, a rented plot just outside of the city or any other place where the sun shines but a few hours each day offer the chance to grow things. Nature herself sends along her aids, rain, sunshine and warmth, to help energetic gardeners.

Definite Plan Is Essential.

Every good garden is started with a definite plan and if, for lack of knowing where the garden is to be located, it is necessary to make an imaginary plan, by all means get a piece of paper, a ruler and a pencil and make such a plan. Working it out will stimulate the desire and cultivate the grower's wish to have a real garden.

Actual outdoor work may be started any time between middle of April and up to end of July. As a matter of fact many gardens started late have produced much better crops than those started too early.

By all means, make a start, even if not absolutely along correct lines. The lessons learned under actual working conditions outdoors will far surpass any from books.

Most soils will bear good crops if properly treated. The most essential element to plant life is humus or rotting vegetation. Wherever manure is obtainable therefore this should be dug into the soil in liberal quantities. Run the spade or digging fork just as deeply into the soil as it will go and turn it over piling the second row on top of the first and soon you will have a trench. Into this trench, work the manure, tramping it down tightly afterward to promote quick rotting. Then plow your next furrow on top of that and continue to dig and work in manure in this fashion until the required space is all prepared.

Where the soil is very heavy and clayey, incorporate coal ashes, sand or any other litter that may be available to lighten the soil. Even a crop of weeds dug under will do some good. Where wood ashes are available or obtainable they should be carefully worked into the surface of the soil after digging because they contain most valuable fertilizing elements. Commercial fertilizers of all kinds are also good to be worked into the surface by means of raking, although, because of their cost, they should be applied in rows where the plants are to grow rather than to be broadcasted.

After digging and applying the fertilizer

rake the soil thoroughly until the surface is perfectly smooth and as level as the lay of the land will permit. The more the soil is raked the easier will be subsequent cultivation, which in turn will determine how well the plants bearing the crops will thrive.

Sowing the Seeds.

Generally speaking all seeds of hardy vegetables may be sown as soon as the ground permits of thorough preparation, which, in the latitude of New York city, is about the middle of April. The exceptions to this are seeds of plants of a more delicate nature which require considerable warmth to do well. This includes beans, corn and all crops growing on vines, such as cucumbers, melon, squash, as well as other plants which originally were children of tropical climates, such as tomatoes, peppers and eggplants. These should not be sown or plants should not be set out until after the middle of May or after the risks from belated night frosts are past.

Seeds should be sown in rows rather than in hills. This will make cultivation easier and causes the garden to look neat and orderly. As a general rule all small seeds should be covered about twice their thickness. For instance, radish seeds measure about one-sixteenth inch in diameter. Therefore covered one-eighth of an inch would be ample. The whole idea of covering the seeds is to prevent them from being moved by animals or blowing away. The roots form first, anyway, and the sooner a combination of moisture and heat from above start the root on its downward course the quicker will the little sprouts appear above the surface. Many a good seed does not come through the soil simply because it is buried too deeply. Coarse seeds like beans, corn and peas, however, should be covered from two to three inches deep in heavy soil, three or four inches deep in lighter loams.

How much seed to sow is also a problem quite perplexing to even a seasoned gardener. Generally speaking the average seed needs as much as a bushel of seed to sow twenty-five to thirty feet of running row. Since the majority of vegetable seeds are good for many years and easily kept from one season to another it is both more practical as well as more economical to buy seeds by the ounce. Depending on the coarseness of the seeds with beet seeds as the coarsest and lettuce as the finest, an ounce of vegetable seed will be sufficient for from 200 to 500 feet of row, but let me warn gardeners not to sow seeds too thickly. One seed to every inch is about right and even then the young seedlings have to be thinned out later in the season to permit of proper development. This brings us to the subject of cultivation.

I do not know which is more important, fertilization or cultivation. Many years of close observation cause me to believe that cultivation is the more necessary, with diligent hoeing, even poor soils can be made to yield fair crops, whereas no amount of soil fertility will help to save crops from being smothered by weeds where hoeing is neglected.

Just as soon as the seedlings peep through the soil begin hoe. Hoe on both sides of the row and also in the path between the rows. Hoeing not only stimulates plant growth by giving the air access to the roots, but it also conserves moisture by forming a dust mulch which prevents evaporation of the moisture, keeping it where it

does the most good, at the roots of the plant.

The Thinning Out Process.

As soon as the seedlings begin to crowd each other in the row, thin them out. This is a phase entirely neglected by many home gardeners and must be held responsible for many failures. Each plant should be given a fair chance for perfect development. Where the roots of the crops are eaten, as for instance with beets, carrots, radishes, etc., the plants should be thinned out to stand two to three inches apart, depending upon what size is desired in the roots. Where the tops are eaten as in the case of greens, lettuce, etc., a foot of space is none too much. Where plants are bearing pods as in the case of beans, peas, etc., the plants should stand from four to six inches apart in the row. Corn should be given at least a foot in the row in rich soil, more on poor ground.

On this matter of thinning out no hard and fast rules can be laid down, since a great deal depends upon local conditions governing the conduct of the garden. One of the safest courses to pursue is to sow seeds thinly to begin with, and then the matter of proper transplanting will not be as serious a job as it would be otherwise.

The last but not least important phase of cultivation is spraying and fighting the insects. Insect pests are divided into two classes—those that chew the leaves and rob the plants of their breathing organs and those that suck the plants' life blood and thus undermine their vitality. Two distinct remedies are needed to combat these enemies. The leaf chewing insects may be fought with slug shot, pyris green and other poisons in either powder or liquid form. The sap sucking insects must be fought with remedies that will destroy their bodies, such as nicotine solutions, aphine or other powerful burning poisons. In connection with this phase of cultivation one ounce of prevention is worth ten pounds of cure. Get busy the minute the enemy are noticed and then fight them to a finish.

Succession of Crops.

No garden is properly conducted unless it is so arranged that it will provide food over a long period, preferably all summer and fall. Two ways are open to accomplish this. One is to sow seeds maturing in succession. The other way is to make repeated plantings of one and the same varieties, being sure that it is an early variety, so that late sowings will mature before frost. In making the plan suggested above, put down first which vegetables you like best and then arrange to provide a liberal supply either from one sowing of early, midseason and late varieties, or from repeated sowings of an early kind.

Certain vegetables deserve to be recognized as staples. The most important are beans, corn, peas, potatoes, tomatoes and cabbage. These vegetables will not only provide fresh green food, but any surplus thereof may be stored in either cans or in the dry state for winter use.

Next to potatoes, the most widely used vegetable is the tomato, and it is really surprising how large an amount of food a dozen well cultivated plants will yield. Those who are fond of tomatoes should figure on the basis of 6 plants for every member of the family, staking these plants and setting them 2 1/2 to 3 feet apart each way, and liberal crops of this vegetable should be grown in any soil provided the right kind of plants are used. Use a good early, such as Bonny Best Globe or Beauty, and a good midseason, like Chalk's Early Jewel, John Baer or Trucker's Favorite, together with a reliable main crop of late variety such as

Stone or Ponderosa. All these varieties have proved their merit in all sections and on all soils.

Whether or not it is advisable to grow potatoes in the average small garden is an open question. Unless the soil is reasonably rich or it can be enriched by the liberal use of well rotted manure, it will be found cheaper in the long run to buy what few potatoes are used in the average small family than to attempt to grow them. However, where space permits and the soil is rich it is advisable to grow a few rows of an early variety, such as Irish Cobbler, Early Rose or Bovee. These will be ready for digging when the price of potatoes is high in the city markets and the soil may then be cleared and utilized for other crops, such as turnips, winter radishes, beets, etc.

Perhaps the most profitable of all vegetables in the small garden are beans. Whether the soil is rich or poor, they always yield as much as any vegetable and thrive where other more exacting classes might not succeed at all. The most practical type to grow in the home garden are the bush beans. Where space permits and poles are available it pays also to grow some climbing beans. And please learn to think of terms of stringless beans rather than string beans, for we now have available in both the green pod and wax pod classes thoroughbred stringless sorts that make all string beans obsolete. Among the most thoroughbred green pod bush beans are Bonny Best, Giant Stringless, Green Pod and Full Measure, while among the wax pod varieties Sure Crop and Brittle Wax are easily the choicest.

Some of the Best Types.

Old Homestead or Kentucky Wonder is still the standby among the green pod pole beans in all sections of the country. Its companion among the yellow podded sorts is Kentucky Wonder Wax, which, however, is not as prolific as the green podded sorts. The Lima bean also are obtainable in both the bush form and the climbing type. While the bush limas are all earlier, they cannot be compared with the tall or climbing varieties as heavy yielders. Where the seasons are longer than a hundred days it pays best to plant pole limas provided, of course, that supports are available.

There is only one way to enjoy real sweet corn and that is right out of the home garden to the table at a few hours' notice. Corn is a typical American vegetable, not particular as to soil and season. Of course, it thrives best in fertile soil and likes plenty of warmth. However, Golden Bantam, the greatest favorite to-day, yields surprising crops of its symmetrical six inch ears even under adverse conditions, and where Golden Bantam sweet corn can be raised there is no need to bother about any other kind, although to arrange for a succession of sweet corn from one planting press into service such other kinds as Mayflower, Bluebird, Mink and White Evergreen among the white varieties, and Golden Evergreen and Golden Rod among the yellow kinds. Even so, sweet corn will be found uniformly better in quality where repeated plantings are made of early sorts, sowing small patches rather than growing a big patch at one time.

One point in particular deserves watching where perfect sweet corn is wanted, and that is that it should never be planted in long, straight rows, but rather in short blocks of four to six rows. This is necessary to insure perfect fertilization and will help to get well filled ears. Early varieties, like

Golden Bantam or Mayflower, may be sown as late as the middle of July and a good crop may be gathered by the middle of September.

Wrinkled Peas Best for Home Gardens.

Among peas, the early and midseason wrinkled varieties are really the only ones deserving consideration in the home garden, because the smooth seeded kinds are entirely devoid of quality. The recent arrival to the ranks of smooth peas named Market Surprise gives us a remarkable sweet pea early in the season. But even this does not compare in quality with such pedigreed sorts as Laxtonian, Little Marvel and Sutton's Excelsior, of which unfortunately the crop is very short this season. My advice is buy or peas early from your seedsman if you are very fond of this crop.

All peas thrive better if provided with brush or some other sort of support. Since they do not thrive well during warm weather repeated planting of peas is not advisable. Rather choose varieties maturing in succession and be satisfied to do without peas after the hot season affects the vines in the garden. For a perfect succession of delicious peas from one sowing try Little Marvel, Laxtonian, Buttercup and Polach among the dwarfs; Boston Unrivalled, Alderman and Duke of Albany among the tall varieties. These last named make vines about five feet high and must have brush or strings for support, whereas the dwarfs thrive reasonably well even without such help.

How to Raise Cabbages.

The average home gardener usually finds it most satisfactory to set out a dozen or two cabbage plants of early varieties, as soon as the weather permits. However, where it is a question of economy and "fun" it pays well to raise your own plants, particularly where the help of a hothead or cold frame may be had. Sorts to sow for extra early crops are Emerald First Early, Jersey Wakefield, Copenhagen Market and Enkhuizen Glory. All these will produce splendid heads by the end of June from seeds sown late in March and plants set in the garden about the end of April.

Where cabbage for winter keeping is the object prepare a spot of ground thoroughly by the middle of May and sow Dutch Ball-head or premium flat Dutch thinly in short rows. As soon as the seedlings make the third pair of leaves they may be lifted and set in their permanent location, wherever there happens to be space in the garden, placing plants at least two feet apart each way. Where the white butterfly troubles the plants or the green cabbage worm develops use slug shot or arsenate of lead to fight these pests, and do it early in the season because the longer it is delayed the more troublesome they will become.

Roots to Grow for Winter Use.

Second only in importance to the vegetables described heretofore are those of which we eat the roots and which, because of their nature, may be stored and kept during the fall and winter months. Perhaps it is well to think of beets, carrots, onions, parsnips, kohlrabi, radishes and turnips as the winter staples which help to fortify us against the long winter months when greens of all kinds are scarce and expensive. Of course all these vegetables are good in the young stage as well, especially the radishes and beets, which may be enjoyed from early June until practically spring of the

following year if the proper varieties are sown and a succession is provided.

To grow delicious, crisp radishes throughout the year let me state that the earliest radishes may be sown as soon as the soil can be put in good gardening condition. Select extra early round and olive shaped sorts for this first crop, choosing Scarlet Tump White Tip, Scarlet Globe, Rosy Gem, Scarlet Button, French Breakfast and other similar varieties.

Later in April or early in May sow the long varieties like Icicle and Chardiers, which stand heat better. Still later, around July 1, sow the summer and winter varieties, which have a very much thicker skin, resist heat well and, in the case of winter radishes, may be kept throughout the winter until the end of February or even later. The best summer and winter radishes are long white Vienna, white Stuttgarter, round and long black Spanish and white Chinese or Celestial. The secret of having radishes that are always just right is to sow short rows often rather than to have one big patch at one time.

Beets and Carrots.

The finest beets are those that are grown quickly and used just about the time they reach two inches in diameter. What has been said about radishes holds good in the case of beets as well—sow a great mass at once. The best all around beet for the home garden is Detroit dark red, with Crosby's Egyptian competing in popular favor as a close second. Both these varieties may be sown up to the middle of July and the latest sowings will produce the roots that will keep best, buried in sand or soil in the cellar, for winter use.

Carrots are treated in a very much similar fashion, excepting that they require a longer season during which to reach full size, and the longer, longer varieties, like half long pointed roots and Danvers half long, will prove the best for winter keeping. For an extra early supply of carrots sow Chantenay or Model. For a still earlier variety, French Forcing, Oshbert and Amsterdam Forcing are ready within forty-five to fifty days from date of sowing, but, of course, it must not be expected that these carrots will grow to as large size as the later and better keeping varieties.

Onions in Great Variety.

Onions give the home gardener the greatest variety of choice. Generally speaking the white ones are the mildest, the yellow the most popular and the red ones the strongest and also the best keepers. The home gardener generally starts with onion sets which may be planted out as early in the spring as the ground can be dug. However, it is comparatively easy, where one has good rich soil, to grow large onions from seeds during one season, if one does not mind the job of repeated hard weeding and thinning out of the seedlings.

Onions must have rich soil since the plants have a very limited root system and they must develop rapidly and steadily. Any check in their development will cause the tops to die, which, of course, means the end of development. The best white sort for the home gardener is unquestionably White Silverskin or Portugal. A later white onion is Southport White Globe. The most widely grown and recognized general utility onion of America is Yellow Globe Danvers, and if a larger, milder onion is wanted, which, however, does not keep well, try a row or two of Prizetaker.

Simple Sign Language for Motorists Adds to Safety of All

ALL motorists are fairly familiar with the straight arm signal by which one driver notifies those following him that he is about to turn to one side or another and warns those behind him that they must slacken speed. So far, so good, but as a sign language this lone signal leaves much to be desired as a means of communication between motor trucks and automobiles while in motion.

An ingenious physician of New York city, Dr. Theron W. Kilmer, has devised a five finger code which bids fair to prove a boon to the motoring fraternity. By it the man at the wheel of one car will be able to communicate with the driver of another machine and give or ask for information that may be of help or vital im-

portance. Dr. Kilmer thus explains:

"There has been no way heretofore by which passing motorists could speedily and intelligently transmit by signal a definite message, and yet all too frequently this interchange would save inconvenience, property loss, or perhaps even life. We have grown used to using the extended arm and hand as a warning, but it does not seem to have occurred to any one that we might amplify this practice by giving to the fingers of the signalling hand certain meanings, accordingly as we displayed one, two, three, four or all five of them. Therefore, I have devised a code along these lines which will cover five situations, bearing directly upon convenience and safety in motoring.

"I have submitted my scheme to Francis M. Hugo, Secretary of State, who is

directly interested in all that concerns automotive vehicles. He has expressed his interest and, I am told, is disposed to urge the adoption and use of the five signals.

"In the absence of ready means of properly directing attention, the general disposition is to let the other fellow attend to his own wants and to find out for himself that something is loose and likely to drop. It is all too human to dislike bringing your own car to a halt for the benefit of some one else who does not realize that there is something wrong with his outfit.

"But it is dawning upon a lot of us that there is such a thing as a Golden Rule well worth observing among people on wheels, and I am satisfied that my five finger code will encourage amenities that will prove of great practical value. A flat shoe is a

pretty common occurrence. It is not always possible for the driver of a car to be aware of that defect.

"One finger held up to that driver, according to my scheme, will indicate that he has a flat shoe. That warning will certainly safeguard property and may prevent injury or loss of life, for a flat shoe has occasioned a fatal accident time and again.

"Bowling toward you or even passing you on the road is a car with a loose and hanging radius rod or there is a tool case or trunk just about ready to jostle off the running board. You hold up two fingers and at once the driver will know by my code that something is amiss with his car and that he should halt and inspect it.

"Did you ever travel an unfamiliar road and wonder whether or not you were going the right way? You don't like to stop the

fellow coming toward you and you are unwilling to bring your own machine to a standstill so that you can get out and make inquiries. You don't have to do either of these things if my signals are known. Hold up three fingers and you ask the question, 'Am I on the right road to the next town?'

A simple nod of the head in answer will suffice to tell you that you are travelling the best and shortest route to your goal. A negative shake will keep you from pursuing the wrong course.

"The 'dangle ahead' signal, four fingers, is perhaps the most important of the whole set. How often have motorists gone along confidently for miles only to be confronted with a closed road! A kindly disposed motorist meeting you some distance back might have shouted the fact to you, but you failed to hear him, thus wasting your time

and wearing your tires out unprofitably by forging ahead unconscious of the obstruction.

"A four finger signal would have made you slow down and ask questions. In the same way a traveller can be cautioned that there is a bad turn near by or a difficult grade crossing which should be made at low speed. These hazards are not infrequent, and ignorance of their nearness exacts its toll continually.

"Finally, the display of all five fingers outspread is the sign to the other fellow to stop and is a request that he come to your assistance. I am satisfied that the general adoption of this code will be instrumental in saving yearly many thousands of dollars; that it will add to the convenience of motor traffic, and that it will be the means of protecting life and limb."



YOU HAVE A FLAT SHOE

SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOUR CAR

AM I ON THE RIGHT ROAD TO THE NEXT TOWN?

THERE IS DANGER AHEAD

STOP, I NEED HELP